

re: application A13724 74

August 9, 1974

Ms. Nancy Raine
National Endowment for the Arts
Washington, D.C.

Dear Nancy,

After an absence of one year, I came back to the TV Center at Binghamton to be pleasantly surprised by the enormous growth of the Center. This Center is attracting artists from New York City, a wide area in upstate New York, Pennsylvania and Canada and, of course, from the local area. The studio facility is booked already up to December. It is rather curious to watch artists make a long trip from Manhattan to work in the sleepy little town near Apalachia. Another case to note is that although this center started with portapak operation, slowly and naturally more sophisticated video synthesis won over and has become a major part of the operation even for the local artist from Binghamton.

My involvement with Binghamton dates back to May of 1968 when Ralph Hocking walked into my second show at Bonino Gallery in New York City. In 1969 Ralph invited me to Harpur College, State University of New York at Binghamton, and he started a modest beginning in the cellar of Harpur College. In 1970 when I was leaving WGBH in Boston for Los Angeles to teach at the California Institute of the Arts, I trusted all my electronic gear to Ralph Hocking to keep and to work on.

Since 1971 I built the now-famous TV Cello for Charlotte Moorman in collaboration with Ralph Hocking and my TV Bed for Charlotte in collaboration with Sherry Miller, the administrative assistant here. Soon Shuya Abe made two Paik-Abe Video Synthesizers which became the nucleus of the whole operation. Soon this Center will be the only place which will have three Paik-Abe video synthesizers. Even since I moved into WNET TV Lab important parts of two of my pieces at WNET, the Selling of New York and Global Groove, were produced here, both of which will be shown nationally. Also major parts of my past two shows at Bonino Gallery were produced here.

Since I left California Institute of the Arts I have not taught anywhere. However my experience and knowledge of video art has increased a great deal and if I could convey my thoughts, process and aesthetic criteria, including the precarious balance between art and hardware in video synthesis to young people, it will be a great satisfaction to me, and I will be grateful if this opportunity were given here at Binghamton. This place is almost the only place I can teach besides WNET and WGBH because nowhere else has the necessary hardware to make use of. Also on this occasion I am trying to make new modules for the Paik-Abe video synthesizer which would increase the capacity very much without much expense.

Last but not least I have never been paid for my work here at Binghamton; I paid even all bus fares myself, easily 20 or 30 trips. Therefore I am quite happy that finally my past investments in money and time would yield some monetary return to me.

Sincerely,

Nam June Paik

NJP/sm